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Security Council

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Statement by the President of the Security Council

At the 6539th meeting of the Security Council, held on 18 May 2011, in connection with the Council's consideration of the item entitled "The situation concerning the Democratic Republic of the Congo", the President of the Security Council made the following statement on behalf of the Council:

"The Security Council welcomes its enhanced dialogue with the Government of the Democratic Republic of the Congo. It reiterates that the challenges the Democratic Republic of the Congo is facing as it enters a phase of stabilisation and peace consolidation require a strategic partnership with the United Nations, including with MONUSCO. The Security Council appreciates and welcomes the constructive approach of the Congolese authorities, and welcomes the efforts made by MONUSCO in this regard.

"The Security Council stresses the importance of four key issues for the stabilisation of the country: peace and security, the forthcoming elections, governance and institution building, and economic development.

"The Security Council considers that the overall peace and security situation in the Democratic Republic of the Congo has improved in recent years. It acknowledges the results of the action taken to address the threat of foreign and national armed groups, particularly the progress made against the Forces Démocratiques de Libération du Rwanda (FDLR), including through the disarmament, demobilization, repatriation, resettlement and reintegration (DDRRR) process. The Security Council underlines that significant security challenges remain, in particular in the Kivus and Orientale Province. The Council is concerned about the difficulties which have been encountered throughout the integration process of the Congrès National pour la Défense du Peuple (CNDP) into the Armed Forces of the Democratic Republic of the Congo (FARDC), and the limited progress made in the reform of the security forces, both army and police. It calls on the Congolese authorities to swiftly adopt the necessary legal framework and implement their long-term vision for the role and structure of the army and police, and strongly encourages MONUSCO and international partners to provide coordinated support for these reforms.

"The Security Council reiterates its deep concern about the persistent high levels of violence, especially sexual violence, and human rights abuses against civilians, mostly affecting women and children including the use and recruitment of children by parties to the conflict, in particular in the eastern

part of the country,. It reiterates its deep concern about continuing activities of the Lord's Resistance Army. It calls for an urgent end to the attacks against the civilian population by all armed groups. It condemns all violations of human rights, including those committed by some elements of the Congolese security forces. The Council welcomes progress with the recent prosecutions after the incidents in Fizi and other cases. It reiterates the urgent need for the swift prosecution of all perpetrators of human rights abuses, and urges the Congolese authorities, with the support of MONUSCO, to implement the appropriate responses to address this challenge, including in Walikale. It urges the Congolese government to take all necessary steps, including ensuring proper conduct by their armed forces in compliance with international humanitarian and human rights law, to facilitate the return of refugees and displaced persons.

"The Security Council notes with interest the electoral calendar presented by the Congolese authorities and urges the Congolese Government as well as all relevant parties to ensure an environment conducive to a credible, inclusive, transparent, peaceful, timely, free and fair electoral process. It expresses its thanks to MONUSCO and the international community for their support to the electoral process to date, and encourages continued support. The Security Council recalls that ensuring freedom of expression and freedom of movement for all candidates, as well as for journalists, human rights defenders and actors from the civil society, is of the utmost importance. It calls upon the Government and all Congolese stakeholders to meet their responsibility in this regard, and further calls upon MONUSCO to support these efforts, in particular through the good offices of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General, enhanced and regular dialogue with the Commission Electorale Nationale Indépendante (CENI) through the Election Partnership Committee, and follow-up on human rights violations. It also calls upon MONUSCO and all relevant international actors to swiftly support the training of the Congolese police, and for donors to provide support for police equipment. It requests the Secretary-General to keep it regularly informed on the electoral process, including on MONUSCO's support to this process.

"The Security Council stresses the need for urgent progress, with regard to governance and institution building, on judicial reform and support to domestic courts, in order to ensure the rule of law and strengthen the fight against impunity. In this regard, the Council notes the interest of the Congolese authorities for establishing specialized mixed courts to address serious violations of international humanitarian and human rights law, complemented by their existing cooperation with the International Criminal Court. It calls upon MONUSCO and other relevant international actors to support the efforts of the Congolese government in these fields, and to assist in the restoration of basic services, including access to justice, road access, priority health and education infrastructures, and security infrastructures, throughout the country, and especially in conflict-affected areas.

"The Security Council underlines the importance of economic development to ensure long-term stabilization and peace consolidation. It stresses that special attention should be placed on women's empowerment and participation in the economy, job creation for youth, and reintegration of former combatants. It also underlines the need for further progress in ensuring

that the trade in mineral resources is founded on sound economic governance practices, and is therefore transparent, fair and legal. It notes that urgent attention is needed to create an enabling environment to attract the public and private investment necessary to address food security, infrastructure and energy needs. The Security Council reiterates that regional cooperation with neighbouring countries should play a key role in the Democratic Republic of the Congo's economic development.

"The Security Council calls upon the international community, the African Union and all relevant sub-regional organizations to further engage in support of the stabilisation efforts in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, notably in the fields of security, the fight against illicit exploitation and trade of natural resources, and socio-economic development."